

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 848

By Hood

A RESOLUTION to recognize Ms. Jimmie Cowan, owner of Ruby's Dress Shop, for her contributions to the City of Murfreesboro as a downtown business merchant on the public square for 54 years.

WHEREAS, on February 17, 2004, at Murfreesboro, Tennessee's Main Street Annual Meeting, Ms. Jimmie Cowan, owner of Ruby's Dress Shop, will receive a special award from Main Street: Murfreesboro/Rutherford County for her contributions to the economic well-being of the downtown business community through her continuous ownership of public square businesses since 1950; and

WHEREAS, in April of 1950, newlyweds Jimmie and Cliff Cowan moved from Lebanon to Murfreesboro so that Cliff could carry on his family's tradition of retail store ownership, which was started by his oldest brother Fred; the couple opened Cowan's, a moderate-priced apparel store, on the north side of the public square; and

WHEREAS, at first the Cowans lived in an apartment above the store until the business was firmly established; over the next 30 years, it had three different addresses - two on the north and one on the west side of the square; and

WHEREAS; in the early years there were a number of similar stores on the square, which was the main shopping venue of Murfreesboro, and in 1963 Jimmie and her sister-in-law, Ruby Cowan opened Ruby's Dress Shop, so named because Ruby was deemed a more feminine name than Jimmie; and

WHEREAS, Jimmie Cowan served as store manager and Ruby was the merchandise buyer and bookkeeper in a partnership that lasted until Ruby's death in 1988; beginning in the decade of the 1960's, many shops moved off of the square and out to the malls, but Jimmie's loyal customers continued to shop at 106 North Church Street because of the high quality, fashionable merchandise and the outstanding customer service offered there; and



WHEREAS, in 1985 the Main Street organization was formed and pursued the goal of revitalization by getting sidewalks repaired, utilities buried, parking meters eliminated and traffic patterns changed; the result was new life for downtown commerce, an economic shot in the arm for downtown retailers and vindication for the steadfastness of both Jimmie Cowan and the loyal customers of Ruby's Dress Shop; and

WHEREAS, even today, Jimmie Cowan is at her post at Ruby's Dress Shop, ten hours a day, six days a week, graciously greeting customers, some of whom have shopped there since its opening 40 years ago, offering her customers and friends tailored classic clothing lines, accessories and fashion advice; and

WHEREAS, it is appropriate that the members of this legislative body pause to specially honor this outstanding retail merchant and beloved member of her community; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we join with the members of Main Street: Murfreesboro/Rutherford County, Inc. and the people of Murfreesboro and Rutherford County in honoring Ms. Jimmie Cowan for her years of astute and dedicated service to her community for 54 years as a downtown merchant and 40 years as proprietress of Ruby's Dress Shop.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we offer Ms. Cowan our heartiest wishes for her every success in all her future endeavors and much happiness in the years to come.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.